



Full reports from Italy

THE many followers of Wycombe Wanderers will be well served by the Bucks Free Press and Mid-Week over the next 10 days. The 'Free Press' is sending out sports editor Stuart Earp to cover Wycombe's tour in full and readers will be given on the spot reports on the matches in Italy.

There will also be photographs from the games plus news of players for next season's campaign.

Make sure of your copies for all the details of Wycombe Wanderers tour to Italy.

Injury blow to Blues' Italian bid

WYCOMBE Wanderers, who leave tonight (Friday) for the return matches in the Anglo-Italian Inter-League Semi-Professional Tournament, suffered two body blows this week with the news that two players are doubtful to play in Italy.

Midfield player Terry Reardon, who had such a fine game against Pistoiese at Loakes Park, suffered a bad accident at work when he fell down stairs and cut his knee. He needed several stitches and is doubtful to play.

The other casualty is Keith Mead who cracked a rib in the friendly against Wimbledon at Bisham Abbey on Monday. Keith fell badly and played on with the injury for some time before being substituted. Mead's injury is particularly disturbing for Wanderers as there is only one other centre back in the touring party — John Delaney. If Keith is unfit it could mean someone like Paul Birdseye moving positions.

This news will come as a real blow to the Blues, who must stand a chance of reaching the final of this prestigious competition. Played for the first time at non-league level, six clubs from England and Italy were invited to compete on a home and away basis. The club with the best overall record from each

country goes through to contest the final.

Wanderers are well placed at the moment having won their two matches at home. They thrashed Pistoiese 4-0 and then beat Teramo 1-0. Two other clubs in the competition also won both games at home — Wimbledon and Nuneaton. Of the three unbeaten English Clubs, Wimbledon look favourites after two impressive victories. Their opponents, Siracusa and Benevento, appear to be the weakest Italian clubs in the competition and that fact could well see Wimbledon through.

The Dons look an extremely effective side. They played Wycombe in the final warm up game on Monday at Bisham Abbey and won 1-0 with a Dave Bassett goal. Their ability up front could be the decisive factor in Italy but they, and the other five clubs involved, must be worried about the tactics the Italians will adopt on home territory.

PHYSICAL

In the home matches, the Italians had several players booked and two or three sent off in the six matches. Their physical approach to the games might well be played on AC Milan's ground in front of a bumper crowd.

unlikely to receive much protection from the referee. The recent England v Italy game in the American Bicentennial tournament showed many of the unsavoury aspects of Italian football.

With £500 sportsmanship money going to clubs who can avoid any disciplinary trouble, retaliation is both dangerous and costly. In this sense, Wycombe's excellent disciplinary record in the last three years will stand them in excellent stead.

The Italian clubs will have the advantage of being match fit as their league programme has only recently finished, whereas Wanderers played their last league match on May 8.

Wycombe can expect large crowds for the games at Pistoiese and Teramo. The Pistoiese ground holds 30,000 and at least 5,000 are expected to watch Wanderers. Teramo is a much smaller town but again, they are reported to be enthusiastic about the competition.

Venue for the final will not be decided until next Wednesday after the second set of matches. It is likely to be on the ground of the successful Italian team — probably Monza. If Monza do qualify for the final the game could well be played on AC Milan's ground in front of a bumper crowd.

The prize for the winners of this competition, which was previously played by professional clubs, is a magnificent trophy which will be held by the winners for one year. The players also receive gold medals and the losing finalists silver medals.

The Wycombe touring party is as follows: Officials: R. Williams, M. Seymour, A. Ward, J. Goldsworthy, R. Hart, G. Cox Staff: B. Lee (manager), J. Reardon (assistant manager), J. Sheppard (attendant). Players: J. Delaney (captain), K. Mead, H. Kennedy, P. Watson, M. Gilligan, P. Spittle, P. Birdseye, R. Davies, D. Evans, J. Butterfield, R. Eaton, J. Priestley, S. Perrin, D. Alexander, T. Reardon. Press: S. Earp.

Guests in the party are Peter Watson who played for Bishop's Stortford last season, Martin Gilligan (Oxford City), John Butterfield (Ilford), Bobby Davies and John Priestley (Carnegie College) and Steve Perrin (Crystal Palace). Steve, who joined Palace from Wycombe last season, was given special permission to play.

PROGRAMME

Saturday, June 12: Monza v Scarborough (8.30 p.m.), Udinese v Stafford (7.30), Pistoiese v Wycombe (8.30).

Sunday, June 13: Teramo v Enfield (5.30), Benevento v Wimbledon (5.30), Siracusa v Nuneaton (5.30).

Wednesday, June 16: Udinese v Scarborough (8.30), Monza v Stafford (8.30), Teramo v Wycombe (5.30), Pistoiese v Enfield (8.30), Siracusa v Wimbledon (5.30), Benevento v Nuneaton (8.30).

Sunday, June 20: Final tie (5.30 or 8.30).